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MAYOR EMANUEL AND SUPERINTENDENT JOHNSON CONGRATULATE 315 NEW OFFICERS IN CHICAGO POLICE GRADUATION

CPD also announced an additional 32 Police Observation Device cameras installed on the Near North Side

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Chicago Police Department Superintendent Eddie Johnson today announced that 315 new police officers have completed their academy training and will hit the streets as part of a mandatory, yearlong probationary period. The department also announced 32 new Police Observation Device, or POD, cameras have been installed on the near north side.

"Our new generation of officers reflect the diversity of our great city, as well as our commitment and values in making Chicago safer, stronger, and more secure for all residents," Mayor Emanuel said. "With our investments in new technology and community policing, along with youth mentorship, after-school programs, and summer jobs, our men and women in uniform will be fully equipped to proudly serve their city and meet every challenge head-on."

Among the new class of officers, 41 percent identify as Hispanic, 17 percent African-American and 4 percent as Asian-American. Twenty-three percent of the graduates are female. Approximately 42 percent of the officers graduated from Chicago Public Schools and 15 percent are military veterans.

The first three months of their new career in law enforcement will begin under the tutelage of a Field Training Officer. These specially-trained officers share their experiences with the new graduates, walking them through everything from filling out paperwork to apprehending an offender.

"The addition of these new officers and this new technology is all meant to make our department both faster and smarter," said CPD Supt. Eddie Johnson. "But we also need the help of the community. We urge all citizens to speak up if they see criminal activity in their neighborhoods. If you see something, say something."

This on-the-job training comes after six months of intense course work at the academy. These courses are based on a new curriculum that is modelled on what officers experience in the field. Officers also study crisis de-escalation tactics, community building, the appropriate use of force and more.

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In addition to these new officers, 15 new evidence technicians and two new captains were also promoted during the ceremony held at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 15, at the Arie Crown Theater within Chicago's McCormick Place Convention Center.

These new officers were part of a two-year push to add over 970 police officers to the department. CPD has already surpassed this goal by adding over 1,000 officers to its ranks. These additions come on top of replacing officers who have retired or moved on from CPD. Thus, the department has actually added 2,352 new officers since 2016.

Some of these new graduates will also be able to incorporate footage from 32 new Police Observation Device, or POD, cameras into their police work. These cameras were unveiled in the 18th Police District (Near North).

These cameras are used to monitor hot spots and are placed in areas known for drug sales, violent crime and shootings. Community input is also considered when determining camera placement.

Cameras have proven to help deter potential criminal activity, and CPD's network includes more than 26,000 different types of cameras citywide. These cameras are useful tools during investigations and have helped the department solve more than 7,400 crimes since 2006.

The POD cameras are also part of a larger technology plan, which also includes ShotSpotter technology. These devices rely on microphones placed throughout the city. On average, these new tools can give police a five-minute lead on incidents of gun violence compared to traditional 911 calls.

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